

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 MCT-01 SY-05 DHA-02 IO-13 SAJ-01

OMB-01 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

FDRE-00 SSM-03 SAM-01 JUSE-00 FTC-01 EB-07 COME-00

TRSE-00 SCS-03 AID-05 CCO-00 OC-06 OPR-02 USSS-00

SCA-01 A-01 FBO-02 /126 W
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R 271400Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0179

INFO AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL FLORENCE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, IT

SUBJECT: WAVE OF BOMBINGS COINCIDES WITH PRO-PALESTINIAN
DEMONSTRATION

1. ON SEPTEMBER 25, ROME WAS THE SCENE OF A LARGE DEMONSTRATION OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE "PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE IN LEBANON." NEWSPAPER REPORTS SAY TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING GROUPS OF RADICAL LEFTISTS, YOUNG SOCIALISTS, DISSIDENT SOLDIERS, ARAB STUDENTS, IRANIAN STUDENTS AND WORKERS FROM AS FAR AWAY AS MILAN TOOK PART. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION REPORTEDLY SPOKE AT THE CONCLUDING RALLY.

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2. THE MORNING OF THE SAME DAY, A WAREHOUSE ON THE OUTSKIRTS

OF ROME BELONGING TO ISRAELI-ITALIAN COMPANY CONCERNED WITH AGRICULTURAL IRRIGATION WAS CONSUMED BY FLAMES. THE FIRE, CAUSED BY A BOMB, ALSO DESTROYED VEHICLES AND SUPPLIES BELONGING TO TWO OTHER COMPANIES. SHORTLY AFTER NOON ON SATURDAY, TWO MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WERE DIRECTED AGAINST THE OFFICES OF THE HEBREW IMMIGRANT AID SOCIETY. FORTUNATELY, DAMAGES WERE VERY LIGHT DUE TO THE PROMPT RESPONSE OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. DAMAGES WERE ALSO LIMITED TO BROKEN WINDOWS AND SHUTTERS WHEN BOMBS AND MOLOTOV COCKTAILS EXPLODED AT THREE OFFICES OF THE BANK OF AMERICAN AND ITALY. A BOMB AT A FOURTH OFFICE OF THE BANK WAS DEFUSED BEFORE IT COULD EXPLODE. CONTEMPORANEOUS WITH THE BANK EXPLOSIONS, AN APPARENT TIME BOMB DID SERIOUS STRUCTURAL DAMAGE TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE AVIS CAR RENTAL AGENCY HERE. FINALLY, MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WERE THROWN AGAINST THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE.

3. THE PRECISE TIMING OF THE BOMB EXPLOSIONS AT LOCATIONS ALL AROUND ROME IS NOTEWORTHY. THE PROBABILITY THAT THE EXPLOSIONS WERE CONNECTED WITH THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE WAS CONFIRMED BY A TELEPHONE CALL SUBSEQUENT TO THE EVENTS AND BY A MESSAGE FOUND IN A TELEPHONE BOOTH. IN THE LATTER, AN "ANTI-ZIONIST COMMANDO" PROMISED FUTURE ACTIONS TO DEFEAT "ZIONISM, THE POWER OF THE US IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS."

4. PERHAPS IN RETALIATION FOR SATURDAY'S BOMBINGS, UNKNOWN PERSONS STARTED A FIRE AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE UNION OF PALESTINIAN STUDENTS IN ROME ON SEPTEMBER 26. THE FLAMES DESTROYED MEDICINES, FOOD AND CLOTHES WHICH HAD BEEN COLLECTED FOR THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE MOVEMENT. VOLPE

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